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Ch. 4

DEATH OF JACOB MARLIN

In 1755 Captain Andrew Lewis was ordered to take his company of rangers and proceed to the frontier to build two stockade forts on the Greenbrier River, in one of which he was to remain himself with the most of his force, and in the other he was to place a lieutenant and fifteen men. One of these forts was at Marlins Bottom (Marlinton) the only place that Seneca Trail comes to the banks of Greenbrier River. The other was, on this trail, at Mill Point. These two forts were well situated to protect the settlers.

This official report has lead some historians to say that Lewis was not at Braddock's Defeat, but Withers says that he was. Lewis and his men were undoubtedly in Pocahontas in 1755, but a few days march over Seneca Trail enabled him to join Braddock. He was gone about two weeks.

The fort stood near where the court house now stands. The stockade was used as a place of refuge by the first settlers whenever there was an Indian scare, but it must have fallen into disuse in Revolutionary times, because in the last Indian raid, in the late 1770, the settlers made for the fort at Mill Point. On June 27, 1755 at ten o'clock in the forenoon, Captain Lewis sent for Jacob Marlin, who lived in a cabin across Knapps Creek, and when Marlin came to the fort, the captain told him to bring in a venision. Marlin promised to try to get one at a salt lick about four miles down the river. He was not at all pleased to have to go so far and believed he would have to hunt another location. The soldiers at the fort fired off their guns every day under army rule, and had scared all the game away in that immediate vicinity.

Nor did he like to have to lay out all night to watch the salt lick in order to a deer. However he was seen to leave about five o'clock, with his gun on his shoulder, and go in the direction of the salt lick. So far as is known that was the last that was seen of Jacob Marlin in life.

About sun down that same day a messenger arrived from Fort Dineveddie commanding Andrew Lewis to take his company and make a forced march toward Fort Duquesne and to join Braddock. The company got under way the next morning at day-break, and joined Braddock in July and marched with him until he was ambushed Captain Lewis and his men knew enough of Indian warfare to take to cover, and were able to cover their retreat so that the survivors got away to the east again, and Captain Lewis returned to Marlins Bottom about the middle of July.

On their return, they found that Jacob Marlin had disappeared, but it seemed only natural that he had moved to new hunting grounds. So no search was made for him. But many years after, under the cliff at the salt lick was found two skeletons, one of an Indian and the other of a white man. It is believed that an Indian was already at the lick when Marlin arrived, and that Marlin shot him, but the Indian revived, while Marlin attempted to scalp him, and that he stabbed Marlin. Thus Jacob Marlin passed out of history.

From - Pocahontas Times
March 20, 1919

By - Andrew Price.